

SAVAGE FISH.

Peral Have Been Known to Tear an Alligator to Pieces.

The most savage and bloodthirsty fish in all the waters of the earth are the peral, declares Charles Livingston Bull in "Under the Roof of the Jungle." They are from twelve to fourteen inches in length and look not unlike the northern bass, although more powerfully built. They have been known to attack an alligator, discover a rent in the skin of the great reptile and tear and devour him until nothing but his bones and rough skin was left.

The peral are silvery green in color. Their thick, muscular jaws are armed with rows of teeth like those of a crocodile, sharp and triangular and fitting exactly together. These jaws and teeth are most formidable, being able to cut to pieces anything less hard than the shell of a tortoise. The lower lobe of the tail is longer than the upper one and all the fins short, giving the impression, as do the thick, rounded body and head, of great strength.

It is fortunate that in all the length and breadth of northern South America these rapacious little murderers are found only in widely scattered localities. Thus one pool will harbor a great school of them, while for miles in either direction up or down the same stream there may not be another individual.

Were it not for this peculiar localization of animal life, for beasts and birds and reptiles must drink, and while those of a few species can get all the water they need from the dew on the leaves in the morning, by far the greater number must come to the streams and pools. Even creatures like that master fisherman, the otter, must give the peral a wide berth, and no other fish can inhabit the same waters.

They have been known to leap a foot out of water and bite a piece out of a man's hand as he was stooping to dip up a drink.

EARL LYTON'S BAD TASTE.

A Dinner Speech That Called Forth Howls of Derision.

I once sat at a banquet given in London by Wilson Barrett to Lawrence Barrett, says a writer in an English magazine. Earl Lyton presided, a curled, oiled, effeminate, supercilious fop. He had a Roman tragedy to sell to Wilson Barrett. That was why he came.

He eulogized Wilson Barrett in a speech. "I believe," he said, "that Mr. Barrett won some success with a piece called (consulting his notes) 'The Lights of London.' I suppose it was the work of some dramatic hack." George Sims sat facing him and never said a word.

Then his lordship went drawing out: "I next find on the list of Mr. Barrett's successes something called 'The Silver King.' Here again I know nothing of the authorship. The names of these dramatic carpenters do not interest me." At which Henry Arthur Jones glared and a flush came into the face of poor blind Henry Herman. "Finally," said Lord Lyton, "Mr. Wilson Barrett has placed on his boards what he humorously calls a Roman tragedy. I refer to 'Claudian,' attributed to one W. G. Wells, of whom I have never heard." This was too much for the banqueters. All of them were personally acquainted with Irving's pet poet, the modest Wilis. So they howled derisively.

And Earl Lyton's tragedy, produced a month later, was a dismal failure.

About Your Initials.

What do your initials spell? Some people have had queer experiences. Names like Arthur S. Sullivan are unfortunate. George (Henry) Augustus Sals preferred to make himself, like George Adam Smith, into G.A.S. Gilbert A'Becket, of course, was just G.A.B. Whistler for awhile dropped his McNeill, fearing the possible ridicule of JAM Whistler. Henry Rider Haggard becomes very dignified as H. R. H.; (Henry) Austin Dolson refuses to be H.A.D., removing his first name, and Mme. de Novikoff, though no longer Olga Kireff, has become "O.K." forever.—London Chronicle.

Cables of Human Hair.

In north Japan is an enormous heathen temple, the timbers of which were hauled from the mountains and put in place with ropes made from the hair of the women of the province. From these tresses, which were brought forth by an edict, two ropes were made, one seventeen inches in circumference and 1,400 feet in length, while the other was eleven inches in circumference and 2,600 feet long.

His Job.

"Signed up as yet?" inquired Actor Yertek Haman.

"Not yet," responded Actor Hamlet Fatt.

"Then how do you eat?"

"I'm a professional bohemian at a bohemian restaurant."—Pittsburg Post.

Corrected.

The Artist—Just a little dab of mize, you see, dear madam. Miss Guah (gushingly)—Oh, no! You are entirely too modest. I should call it quite a big dab.—Puck.

The Voice of Experience.

Singleton—The woman I marry must be an ideal housekeeper. Woderly (with a sigh)—Take my tip, old man, and freeze on to a practical one.—Chicago News.

A Legend

By AMBROSE L. TURNER

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Several hundred years ago everybody believed in a personal devil whose business it was to mingle with human beings and tempt them from virtue.

Hans Bawner was a sutor for the hand of Gretchen Staebel. Gretchen's father was much respected in the community for his probity and piety, and young Hans was so religiously inclined that he thought of being a priest. But so deep was the love between him and Gretchen that he realized that he would wreck her happiness as well as his own if he entered a church where celibacy is imposed on the clergy, and he gave up what he really preferred. Nevertheless he was considered to be well nigh a saint.

One evening Hans and Gretchen and their relatives and friends were gathered at the Staebel home to celebrate the betrothal of Hans and Gretchen. In the midst of the festivities a knock was heard at the door, and a young man, strikingly handsome, was admitted, who said that he was a traveler on his way to Munich and begged to be permitted to pass the night in the house. Hospitality of this kind was usual in those days, and the young man, who gave his name as Herman, was not only promised a night's lodging, but was invited to take part in the festivities.

The stranger soon became the life of the party. Brilliant sayings fell from his tongue that astonished and delighted the company. He suggested different methods of amusement and at last, pulling from his pockets cards similar to the playing cards in vogue today, offered to show those assembled a game. All were pleased at learning some novel amusement and assented readily. Herman proposed first to show three of them how to play the game, after which the rest might divide into sets of three, each three playing separately.

Those chosen to be taught the game were Hans and Gretchen. The teacher dealt the cards and showed them how to play one hand and then another and by this time they knew enough about it to play it. Those looking on then proceeded to arrange themselves at tables, and presently the whole company were deeply immersed in the amusement introduced by the handsome stranger.

Herman was extremely deferential to Gretchen. Every now and again he would show his white teeth in a smile under his exquisitely cut lips and mustache, the carefully waxed ends of which pointed upward. Moreover, his eyes were constantly meeting hers and seemed to produce upon her a marked impression. At first she attempted to turn hers away, but she soon lost the power to do this. Indeed, she seemed like a bird charmed by the eyes of a serpent.

It was not long before Hans noticed that his betrothed was being fascinated by the stranger. But, being a mild-mannered man, more devoted to saying his prayers than to quarreling, he held his peace, hoping that no great harm was being done and on the morrow Herman would have journeyed on and been forgotten. But Gretchen seemed not only attracted by the stranger, but to have been seized with a sudden aversion for her lover. When Hans called her attention to a mistake she was making in her play she gave him a sharp answer. When he protested at some unfair advantage taken of him in the cards by Herman she abused him, taking the latter's part.

It soon came about that the game was rather between Hans and Herman for Gretchen than in the cards. Herman became bolder and bolder in his attentions to her, and she seemed to have been bewitched by him. He ridiculed Hans for his stupidity in the play, and Gretchen supported him in his strictures. And all the while he was darting love glances at her which she returned in kind.

During this time the others had become so absorbed in the game the stranger had introduced that they knew nothing of what was going on between him and Hans and Gretchen. They were suddenly made aware that something was wrong by Hans loudly cursing the stranger and attempting to thrust a dagger into his breast. But Herman easily turned away the blow by raising his arm, and all three rose and stood. Hans glaring at Herman and Gretchen glaring at Hans. Such was the tableau when the door was opened and the priest entered.

Pausing, he gazed in a mild surprise at the scene before him. Herman's back was toward him, so that he could not see his face. But Herman, noting that all eyes were turned toward the door, looked around. His eyes fell upon the rosary worn by the father and the suspended cross. Instantly the look of injured innocence his face had worn deserted him. A door near him stood open, and, cringing, he withdrew through it and out into the night.

The moment he was gone Gretchen fell fainting into Hans' arms.

No one doubted that the stranger was Satan in human form, come to corrupt both Hans and Gretchen and that he had been driven away by the sight of the cross. The legend has been handed down for centuries among the descendants of the pair, and by some of them it is believed to this day that their progenitors were really visited by the devil.

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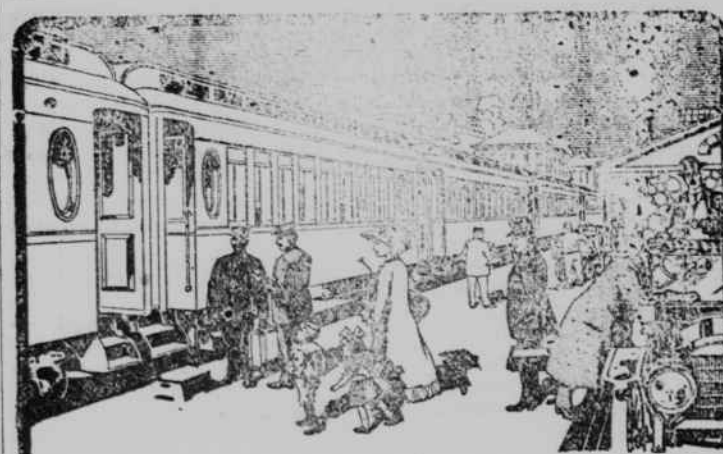
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			\$562,352.15
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Capital Stock		\$50,000.00	
Surplus Fund		75,000.00	
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